

Dear State Employees,

I am very pleased to confirm what you may have already read in the *Benefit Press Bulletin* released by Employee's Group Insurance: There will be no premium increases for 2005. Following the change to 85% employer contributions in 2003, an additional 1,815 new enrollees have strengthened our pool and brought down overall costs. In fact, where existing members averaged \$294.09 per person per month in 2003-2004, new enrollees averaged, at most, about \$96 per person per month. This has led to a 7.5% reduction in our monthly average costs.

Such cost containment is powerful proof that we all have an important role to play in curbing the rising price of health care in our state. While there are certainly important policy considerations ahead, ultimately, the decisions we make as individuals and as families drive health expenses, which in turn drive premiums. In this way, I think we are fortunate as employees of state government to command complete control of our costs and drive our own futures. As never before, healthy lifestyles, good diet and exercise positively affect not just how we feel each morning, but also how much money is in our pockets at the end of the day.

I continue to explore new health-based employee policies, and I welcome your suggestions as always. Thank you for your demonstrated support of the 85/15 contributions and for choosing the state of Wyoming as your employer.

Best regards,

Dave Freudenthal
Governor